

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

*"For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill.
To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill."*

Sun Tzu

The possibility of US troops becoming involved in a low-intensity conflict (LIC) is ever increasing. This manual provides the framework for understanding LIC at the battalion and brigade levels to include the definition and nature of LIC, the military's role, imperatives, and operational categories. It also provides leadership considerations that affect low-intensity operations.

Section I. BACKGROUND

LIC is a politico-military confrontation between contending states or groups. It is below general war and above routine peaceful competition. It often involves protracted struggles of competing principles and ideologies. LIC ranges from subversion to the use of armed force. It is waged by a combination of means, employing political, economical, informational, and military instruments. LICs are often localized, usually in the Third World, but they contain regional and global security implications.

1-1. NATURE OF LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT

The four instruments of national power are political, economical, informational, and military. LICs are politically dominated. Within the operational continuum, LIC overlaps peacetime competition, conflict, and war. The US goal is to maintain or return to routine peaceful competition and to allow for the development of democracy within the free world. This manual focuses on tactical units' tasks and missions across the operational continuum just short of declared war.

1-2. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

LIC is an environment that is characterized by the pursuit of national objectives in a political dimension. The military supports the political, economical, and informational instruments of national power. Military operations conducted in the LIC environment are also influenced by the physical and social environments in which they occur.

1-3. MILITARY ROLE IN LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT

Military operations in LIC are normally joint in nature and are characterized by the indirect versus direct application of force.

a. The Army role in LIC is identified in JCS Pub 3-07 and FM 100-20. The president sets policy, the CINC establishes how to implement those policies operationally, and the commanders on the ground establish how to execute them tactically. Unit contingency plans call for units to deploy to various locations and to conduct tactical operations, which have the potential to change from peace or conflict to war. However, the US intent in LIC is to protect and advance its national interests without recourse of war.

b. The role of brigades and battalions across the operational continuum presents a unique challenge. No matter what parameters have been established for the use of force, a disciplined unit,

with soldiers proficient at individual skills who are operating under a clear expression of the commander's intent, can perform successfully at the tactical level in this environment.

c. Soldiers must be prepared to operate in a variety of geographical conditions—from jungles and mountains to deserts and cities. These conditions, coupled with extremes in weather, can have a significant affect on operations. The language,

religious, and cultural differences between our society and those that soldiers may come in contact with pose additional challenges. The basic values and beliefs that are common to US soldiers are not universally embraced. Also, the continuing growth of urban environments throughout the world makes operations in built-up areas significant in all types of human conflicts.

Section II. IMPERATIVES

The tenets of AirLand Battle doctrine characterize successful conventional military operations and apply equally in LIC. Success in LIC requires planning and conduct of operations based on the following imperatives.

1-4. POLITICAL DOMINANCE

Political objectives affect military operations in conventional war. In LIC operations, they *drive* military decisions at every level—from the strategic to the tactical. All commanders and staff officers must understand these political objectives and the effect of military operations on them. They must adopt courses of action that legally support those objectives even if the courses of action are beyond traditional doctrine. For this reason, the planning and mission data analysis process in LIC should use the factors of METT-T with considerations to political factors.

1-5. UNITY OF EFFORT

Military leaders must integrate their efforts with both military and civilian organizations of the US and of countries we support to gain a mutual advantage in LIC. Military planners must consider how their actions contribute to initiatives that are also political, economical, and psychological in nature. Unity of effort calls for interagency integration and cooperation. This permits effective action within our governmental system. Commanders may answer to civilian chiefs or may employ the resources of civilian agencies.

1-6. ADAPTABILITY

Adaptability is the ability and willingness to change or modify structures or methods to accommodate different situations. It requires careful mission analysis, comprehensive

intelligence, and regional expertise. Adaptability is more than just tailoring or flexibility, which implies use of the same techniques in different situations. Successful military operations in LIC require the Armed Forces to use adaptability, not only to modify existing methods and structures but also to develop new ones for each situation.

1-7. LEGITIMACY

Legitimacy is the acceptance of the government's right to govern or of a group or agency to enforce decisions. It is neither tangible nor easily quantifiable. Popular votes do not always confer or reflect legitimacy. Legitimacy comes from the idea that authority is genuine and effective, and it uses proper agencies for good purposes. No group or force can create legitimacy itself, but it can encourage and sustain legitimacy by its actions. Legitimacy is the central concern of all parties directly involved in a conflict.

1-8. PERSEVERANCE

LICs rarely have a clear beginning or ending marked by decisive actions that end in victory. They are, by nature, protracted struggles. Even those short, sharp contingency encounters that do occur are better assessed in the context of their contribution to long-term objectives. Perseverance is critical to success but does not preclude taking decisive action. It requires careful, informed analysis to select the right time and place for action. Perseverance helps commanders reject

minor, short-term successes in favor of actions in pursuit of long-term goals. These imperatives

apply in all four LIC operational categories (see Section III).

Section III. OPERATIONAL CATEGORIES

Military operations in LIC are divided into four operational categories. This section identifies the types of operations and roles of maneuver units within each category.

1-9. SUPPORT FOR INSURGENCY AND COUNTERINSURGENCY

US security interests may lie with an incumbent government or with an insurgency. The objective in insurgency is to overthrow the legally constituted government through subversion and armed conflict. In counterinsurgency (COIN), the objective is for the host government to defeat an insurgency through military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic action. (See Chapter 2.)

1-10. COMBATTING TERRORISM

The aim of combatting terrorism is to protect installations, units, and individuals from the threat of terrorism. Combatting terrorism includes both antiterrorism and counterterrorism actions throughout the operational continuum (see Chapter 3). The program provides coordinated action before, during, and after terrorist incidents.

1-11. PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

PKOs are military operations that maintain peace already obtained through diplomatic efforts. A

peacekeeping force supervises and implements a negotiated truce to which belligerent parties have agreed. The force operates strictly within the parameters of its terms of reference (TORs). Normally, the peacekeeping force is forbidden to use force, except for self-defense. (See Chapter 4.)

1-12. PEACETIME CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS

PCOs include such diverse actions as disaster relief; counter-narcotic operations; and land, sea, and air strikes. The unifying feature of these actions is the rapid mobilization of effort to focus on a specific problem, usually in a crisis. PCOs are guided at the national level by the crisis action system. (See JCS Pub 5-02.4). Often, these operations take place away from customary facilities. They require deep penetration and temporary establishment of long lines of communication (LOC) in a hostile environment. PCOs may require restraint in the use of force or concentrated violent actions. (See Chapter 5.)

Section IV. LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES

Leaders must contend with disorientation caused by different cultures and values, unfamiliar and discomforting levels of poverty, uncertainty of purpose, and problems in identifying the enemy. The nature of the conflict requires restraint in the use of force. However, soldiers may be subject to severe provocation or the threat of death from the most unlikely sources at the most unlikely times. Leaders must also exert a positive influence when they do not have formal authority—for example, the need to rely on persuasion in dealing with foreign forces, other US Government agencies, or nongovernmental organizations and individuals.

1-13. FORCE PROTECTION

Force protection is a critical issue that is further complicated in the LIC environment.

a. Restrictions on the conduct of operations and the use of force must be clearly explained and understood by all echelons. Soldiers must under-

stand that their actions, no matter how minor, may have far-reaching effects. Reasons for this may include treating the population with respect and courtesy, which is an important part of the intercultural preparation. Any action can be exploited rapidly, by both friendly and enemy media and PSYOP efforts. Commanders must always consider the aspects of force protection and how it relates to established ROE.

b. Winning the information fight is often an overlooked aspect. Language is a special consideration for all operations, whether interfacing with the established governmental agencies or with the populace. Considerations for the exchange of information in combined or unilateral operations must be examined. During decentralized operations, the ability to communicate with different agencies and the local populace helps in protecting the force.

1-14. FORCE SUSTAINMENT

The ability of friendly forces to sustain themselves in undeveloped areas and the support provided to and received from a host country are unique. Familiar support bases may not always be available. Locally procured support may not be suitable for US forces, and its provision may deprive the host country of scarce resources needed for its own use. Small US units often operate independently. To provide a logistic base on the scene would elevate total US military presence; however, this may not be acceptable.

1-15. DISCIPLINE MAINTENANCE

Disciplined soldiers are vital to the successful performance of US forces in LIC. They must observe the ROE while coping with the stress of daily operations. Soldiers must adjust psychologically to enemy operations, which may include acts of terrorism, and must display acceptable practices to the local populace.

1-16. FRATRICIDE PREVENTION

The overriding consideration in any tactical operation is the accomplishment of the mission. Commanders must consider fratricide in their

planning process because of the decentralized nature of execution in the LIC environment. However, they must weigh the risk of fratricide against losses to enemy fire when considering a given course of action. Fratricide is prevented by adhering to the following:

a. **Doctrine.** Doctrine provides the basic framework for accomplishment of the mission. Commanders must have a thorough understanding of US, joint, and host nation doctrine.

b. **Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures.** TTPs provide a "how to" that personnel at all levels understand. They are disseminated in doctrinal manuals and SOPs.

(1) *Planning.* A simple, flexible maneuver plan that is disseminated to the lowest level of command aids in the prevention of fratricide. Plans should include the maximum use of SOPs and battle drills at the user level. They should incorporate adequate control measures, and fire support planning and coordination to ensure the safety of friendly troops.

(2) *Execution.* The execution of the plan must be monitored with regard to the location of friendly troops and their relationship to friendly fires. Subordinate units must understand the importance of reporting their positions. Company and battalion commanders must know the location of their troops at all times. They must exercise positive control, particularly when employing artillery, mortars, and helicopter and air strikes.

c. **Training.** Individual and collective training contain many tasks that support operations in LIC. Well-trained soldiers know their capabilities and limitations. Training is the most important sector in preventing fratricide. Training is supported by—

(1) *Situational awareness.* Well-trained soldiers can accomplish routine tasks instinctively. This allows them to focus on what is happening around them; they can "see" the battlefield. They maintain an awareness of the relative location of enemy and friendly personnel.

(2) *Rehearsal.* Rehearsal is training for the mission at hand. Commanders at every level must plan time for this critical task.